

*Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate :*

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons :*

I have much satisfaction in meeting you at this, the usual and most convenient season of the year, and under the present auspicious circumstances of the Country.

The hope I was sanguine enough to express at the close of the last Session, that no further attempt would be made to disturb our frontier, was doomed to early disappointment. The Session had scarcely closed when lawless bands assembled within the *United States* in great numbers, and renewed the menace of invasion. They ventured to cross the border at two points, but were promptly met and repelled. So complete and humiliating was the repulse, that the invaders lost heart and hope, threw away quantities of arms, and fell back to encumber the villages in their rear, with their starving and demoralized masses. Our Militia rallied at the first call to arms with praiseworthy alacrity, and the spirit which pervades the country, swelled their numbers with volunteers from all quarters. The gallantry displayed and the success achieved, have been duly recognized by the highest Military authority, and honored in gratifying terms of appreciation, by Her Most Gracious Majesty. In maintaining the Militia on active duty, the Government incurred an outlay to a considerable amount beyond what was provided by the votes of last Session. The accounts of the entire expenditure for the defence of the frontier will be laid before you, and I feel confident that you will pass a bill to indemnify the Government.

My anticipations of success in regard to the Act passed for the Government of *Manitoba*, and the North West Territories, and in regard to the Military Expedition, which it was necessary to despatch, have been fortunately realized. The troops surmounted the difficulties of the long and toilsome route with endurance and intelligence. They encountered no armed opposition, and their arrival at the *Red River* was cordially welcomed by the inhabitants. The people of the new Province have, under the Constitution accorded to them last year, assumed all the duties of self-government, and every appearance warrants the hope that they are entering steadily upon a career of peace and prosperity.

The Legislature of *British Columbia* has passed an Address to Her Majesty, praying for admission into the Union, on the terms and conditions therein stated. All the papers on this important subject will be submitted, and your earnest attention is invited to them. I hope that you will think that the terms are so fair as to justify you in passing a similar address, so that the boundaries of *Canada* may, at an early day, be extended from the shores of the *Atlantic Ocean* on the one side, to the shores of the *Pacific* on the other.

Should such an address be adopted, it will be necessary for you to take steps to secure the early exploration and survey of a route for an Interoceanic Railway, with a view to its construction in accordance with the terms of Union.

The acquisition of the North West Territories throws upon the Government and Parliament of the Dominion the duty of promoting their early settlement by the encouragement of immigration. This duty can be best discharged by a liberal land policy, and by opening up communications through our own Country to *Manitoba*. The means proposed for accomplishing these purposes will be submitted for your consideration.

Her Majesty's Government has decided upon referring the Fishery question, along with other questions pending between the two Countries, to a Joint Commission to be named by Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the *United States*. On this commission *Canada* will be represented. This mode of dealing with the various matters in controversy will, I trust, lead to their satisfactory adjustment. *Canada* urges no demand beyond those to which she is plainly entitled by Treaty and the law of nations. She has pushed no claim to an extreme assertion, and only sought to maintain the rights of her own people fairly and firmly, but in a friendly and considerate spirit and with all due respect to foreign powers and international obligations. The thanks of the country are due to the Admiral on the Station and those under his command, for the valuable and efficient aid which they rendered to our cruisers during the past season in maintaining order and protecting the inshore Fisheries from encroachment.